JOURNAL
OF
SOUTH AFRICAN BOTANY
VOL. XXII.

Published: 3RD. APRIL, 1956

A NEW MARSH ERICA FROM WEMMERSHOEK.

By CAPTAIN T. M. SALTER, R.N.

Erica Bakeri Salter sp. nov. (Ericaceae—Ericoideae) § Leptodendron.

Fruticulus paludosus ad 60 cm. altus, supra tortuose ramosus, partibus herbaceis omnino glabris. *Rami* ramulique graciles politi castanei saepe contorti. *Folia* anguste linearia plerumque patentia saepe recurva, 2·5—3 mm. longa, petiolis rubris. *Flores*, pedunculis et sepalis inclusis, rosei apice ramulorum brevium terminales, 1—3-nati ultimi interdum subumbellati. *Pedunculi* 1—2 mm. longi vel leviter longiores: bracteae 3 remotae circa 0·5 mm. longae brevissime ciliatae. *Sepala* attenuato-ovata apicem versus carinata circa 1 mm. longa, breviter ciliata. *Corolla* ovoideo-urceolata 3—3·2 mm. longa, sed in siccitate in adventu brevior, tubo quam lobis erectis 3-plo longiore. *Stamina* inclusa filamentis supra leviter sigmoideis: antherae oblongo-cuneatae basifixae, 0·5 mm. longae, basin ampliatam versus scabridae, poro fere dimidio lobi: aristae dorsales scabridae, 0·3—0·4 mm. longae. *Ovarium* sessile subturbinatum in parte superiore dense hispidum: stylus inclusus, stigmate capitato.

CAPE PROVINCE: Paarl Div.; in marshy ground near the railway at Wemmershoek, *Baker* 420 *holotype* in the Bolus Herbarium. Flowers Aug.—Oct.

A marsh shrublet up to 60 cm. high, intricately branched above, the herbaceous parts entirely glabrous. *Branches* and branchlets slender, often irregularly contorted, shining chestnut brown. *Leaves* narrow-linear, mostly spreading, often recurved, 2·5—3 mm. long, usually much shorter than the internodes, bright green in the living state: petioles red. *Flowers*, including the peduncles and sepals, rose-pink, terminal on short branchlets, 1—3-nate, the ultimate sometimes subumbellate. *Peduncles*

1—2 mm. or slightly more long: bracts 3, remote, about 0·5 mm. long, very shortly ciliate. *Sepals* ovate-attenuate, keel-tipped, about 1 mm. long, shortly ciliate. *Corolla* ovoid-urceolate, 3—3·2 mm. long, but appearing shorter when dried, the tube about three times as long as the erect lobes. *Stamens* included, the filaments somewhat sigmoid above: anthers oblong-cuneate, basifixed, about 0·5 mm. long, scabrid towards the widened base, the pore nearly half as long as the lobe: awns dorsal, scabrid, 0·3—0·4 mm. long. *Ovary* sessile, subturbinate, densely hispid on the upper part: style included: stigma capitate.

Though this glabrous marsh species seems to fall most nearly under the Section Leptodendron as defined, it is in no way related to any of the species in that rather ambiguous Section. It appears, although the corolla and all the herbaceous parts are glabrous and the leaves 3-nate, to be closely related to some of the marsh species of the § Ephebus which occur in the Cape Peninsula, viz. *E. cyrillaeflora* Salisb. *E. paludicola* L. Bol., *E. limosa* L. Bol., *E. Salteri* L. Bol. and *E. heleogena* Salter. Very like these species in habit, it often depends on surrounding marsh vegetation for support, and the chestnut brown or reddish brown stem and branches are very similar.

It is not, of course, known for certain whether *Erica Bakeri* occurs in any other locality, but it is noteworthy that the last four of the five marsh heaths mentioned above are peculiar, in that each of them seems to prefer its own particular mountain marsh, never having been found elsewhere, and they do not grow in association. *E. cyrillaeflora* has the same habit in the Cape Peninsula, only occurring now in one marsh between Simonstown and Kommetje, but, according to the late Dr. N. E. Brown, it was formerly recorded from Rocklands. This may be a mistake for Brooklands which is near the marsh mentioned above for it is unlikely that it would grow at such a low altitude. Salisbury's *type* was collected over 150 years ago in the rather vague locality "Stellenbosch Division; Hottentots Holland", but it has never been observed since, except in the Cape Peninsula.

I have named this new species in honour of Colonel H. A. Baker, its discoverer. Colonel Baker has recently been carrying out an intensive field study of the Ericaceae of the Cape Peninsula and has discovered almost certain hybridization between *Erica empetrifolia* L. and *E. mollis* Andr., hitherto unrecorded, besides bringing to light several facts which make modifications in existing descriptions necessary. I have to thank him for undertaking much of the necessary preliminary research in establishing *E. Bakeri* as a hitherto undescribed species, ascertaining that no other specimens are lying amongst the Incertae in the three local herbaria and for preparing the accompanying Figure.

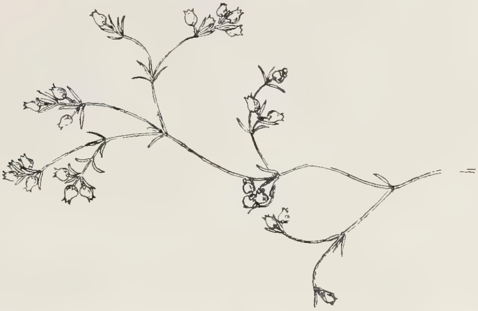

FIG. 1. *Erica Bakeri* Salter. (Natural size.) (*Baker* 420.)
Del. H. A. Baker.

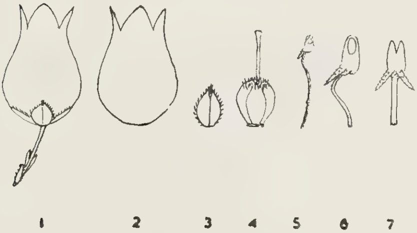

FIG. 2. 1. Flower × 6. 2. Corolla × 6. 3. Sepal × 6. 4. Gynaecium × 6. 5. Stamen × 6. 6. Anther, side view × 12. 7. Anther, back view × 12. (*Baker* 420.) *Del.* H. A. Baker.